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TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION; WASHINGTON-TEHRAN DISCUSSIONS; BIO-FUELS  
DEBATE; CHAVEZ AND TECHINT; 05/15/07; BUENOS AIRES

#### 1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Key international stories today include the upcoming meeting between US and Iranian delegations to discuss Iraq; an opinion on the bio-fuels debate; and the upcoming meeting between Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and Paolo Rocca, head of the Techint group, which has been named in connection with the Skanska corruption scandal in Argentina.

#### 2. OPINION PIECES AND EDITORIALS

- "Iran's contribution could prove crucial for the region"

Leading "Clarín" carries an opinion piece by its international analyst Oscar Raul Cardoso, who opines (05/15) "Mahmoud Ahmadinejad confirmed yesterday that Iranian and US delegates will soon meet in order to discuss ways to cooperate to solve (or at least soften) the bloody chaos in Iraq. The Iranian regime has close ties to the Iraqi Shiite majority and has long been accused by Washington of supporting insurgents against the US-UK occupation.

"... The impossible mission of establishing some kind of dialogue with insurgents or obtaining the people's support has condemned occupying forces to live in a boiler, something that makes any kind of contribution, particularly that from Iran, indispensable.

"Yesterday, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) announced that Iran (appears to have) solved most of its technological problems related to uranium enrichment. According to the IAEA, more than 1,300 centrifuge plants are operating in the Natanz facilities, which makes more believable that uranium enrichment could soon reach an industrial scale.

"The UN imposed two different kinds of sanctions on Iran due to this issue (both of them, promoted by Washington), but some other countries, such as Russia and France believe that this policy of attempting to put a brake on the Iranian nuclear program does not make any sense. What follows in this story is open to all kinds of speculation."

- "The false controversy on bio-fuels"

Business-financial "El Cronista" carries an opinion piece by Andres R. Alcaraz, businessman and journalist expert in economics and business, who penned (05/15) "Out of all the current world controversies, the one sparked by bio-fuels... swiftly became one of the stellar controversies, which is as fervent and ideology-driven as it is bizarre and insignificant.

"... If the world depended on one or another source of energy exclusively, the outcome would be world inflation because their prices would rise much more than we have seen so far. And this would

imply much more suffering - the world economy would not be able to avoid a tsunami of recession. Inflation is the constraint because it makes everyone lose. Therefore, neither fossil fuels nor bio-fuels will completely disappear from the energy matrix simply because ... There are no longer strategic fools these days."

- "Techint expects more demands from Chavez"

Alejandro Bianchi and Horacio Riggi, economic columnists of business-financial "El Cronista," write (05/15) "When Paolo Rocca, President of the Techint group, arrived in Caracas, he knew that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez... was not only going to ask him to lower the price of iron paid by the conglomerate or to increase the local supply of steel and seamless tubes.

"Bearing much pressure from the strongest trade union in the country, which is asking for the nationalization of Sidor (the Techint-controlled steel company), both parties intend to reach a deal that will not entail a re-nationalization but that will include much broader improvement measures, which will include labor conditions.

"... The Argentine Government takes it for granted that the issue will be solved and is confident that Chavez will honor his word. However, members of the government say that Chavez will take the occasion to ask for additional and improved conditions not to continue with his nationalization raid, such as improved labor standards for Sidor employees, whose powerful trade union (Sutiss) asked Chavez in writing for the nationalization (of the company)."

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